

Message Text

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TO NONALIGNED MOVEMENT COLLECTIVE

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E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: IS, PORG

SUBJECT: ISRAEL'S PROSPECTS AT COLOMBO

1. FOLLOWING IS TEXT OF INR REPORT NO. 543 DATED
AUGUST 3, 1976.

2. THE SUMMIT MEETING OF THE NON-ALIGNED MOVEMENT
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(NAM) TO BE HELD IN COLOMBO, AUGUST 16-19, IS UNLIKELY TO
ENDORSE A PROPOSAL FOR ISRAEL'S EXCLUSION FROM THE UNGA.

(NOTE: SYRIA AND OTHERS REPEATEDLY CALL FOR THE EXPUL-
SION OF ISRAEL FROM THE UN. THIS MOVE, HOWEVER, WHICH

WOULD REQUIRE A RECOMMENDATION FROM THE SECURITY COUNCIL, WOULD EITHER FAIL TO RECEIVE THE NECESSARY NINE VOTES OR BE VETOED BY THE US, THE UK, AND FRANCE. FACED WITH THE PROSPECT OF DEFEAT IN THE COUNCIL, SYRIA IS MORE LIKELY TO DIRECT ITS EFFORTS TO THE SUSPENSION/EXCLUSION OF ISRAEL FROM THE UNGA. SUCH ACTION PROBABLY WOULD FOLLOW A SUCCESSFUL CHALLENGE OF ISRAEL'S CREDENTIALS, THE SAME PROCEDURE THAT WAS ADOPTED IN SUSPENDING SOUTH AFRICA FROM PARTICIPATING IN THE 1974 UNGA.)

3. THE COLOMBO MEETING PROBABLY WILL ENDORSE THE LANGUAGE OF THE NAM DRAFT POLITICAL DECLARATION:

(A)--CALLING FOR MANDATORY ECONOMIC AND MILITARY SANCTIONS AGAINST ISRAEL UNDER CHAPTER VII OF THE UN CHARTER;

(B)--REAFFIRMING SUPPORT OF THE 30TH UNGA RESOLUTION EQUATING ZIONISM WITH RACISM; AND ALSO

(C)--CONDEMNING ISRAEL'S RESCUE OPERATION IN ENTEBBE IN EARLY JULY AS A VIOLATION OF UGANDAN SOVEREIGNTY AND TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY.

4. ALTHOUGH ISRAEL'S RESCUE OF 103 HOSTAGES OF A HIJACKED AIR FRANCE AIR BUS FROM UGANDA'S ENTEBBE AIRPORT ON JULY 3 PROVOKED CONSIDERABLE CRITICISM, MOST ARAB AND AFRICAN STATES STILL SEEM UNWILLING TO PUSH FOR ISRAELI EXCLUSION FROM THE UNGA. THIS RELUCTANCE WAS EVIDENT BOTH AT THE NON-ALIGNED COORDINATING COMMITTEE (NACC) MEETING IN ALGIERS IN MAY AND AT THE ORGANIZATION OF AFRICAN UNITY (OAU) SUMMIT IN JULY.

5. THE ALGIERS MEETING:

6. MODERATE ARAB AND AFRICAN STATES JOINED TOGETHER AT LAST YEAR'S OAU SUMMIT IN KAMPALA TO THWART REPEATED EFFORTS BY MILITANT ARAB SPOKESMEN TO SEEK OAU SUPPORT
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FOR A RESOLUTION CALLING FOR ISRAEL'S EXCLUSION FROM THE UNGA. THIS ALLIANCE HELD FIRM THROUGH THE NACC MEETING AT ALGIERS (MAY 30-JUNE 2, 1976), WHERE EGYPT, IN PARTICULAR, AND ZAIRE AND SENEGAL DEFEATED A SYRIAN EFFORT TO INSERT A PARAGRAPH ON ISRAELI EXCLUSION IN THE NACC DRAFT COMMUNIQUE. THE MODERATE DEFENSE WAS BOLSTERED BY:

(A)--YUGOSLAV, IRAQI, AND ALGERIAN SUPPORT (ALGERIA AND IRAQ, FORMER BACKERS OF SYRIA, WERE PIQUED BY SYRIAN INTERVENTION IN LEBANON); AND

(B)--PLO AND OTHER ARAB INACTIVITY.

7. ARAB HESITATION TO ENDORSE THE EXCLUSION PROPOSAL AT THE NACC REFLECTED AN EARLIER DECISION BY THE ARAB MODERATES IN ALGIERS TO AVOID THE ISSUE. THEIR INTENTION WAS TO DEFLECT THE ACRIMONY THAT SOURED LAST YEAR'S SUMMIT AT KAMPALA AND THE MEETING OF NON-ALIGNED FOREIGN MINISTERS AT LIMA IN SEPTEMBER. THERE ARE INDICATIONS THAT THESE DIFFERENCES AMONG THE ARABS HAVE PERSISTED AND WILL NOT BE WORKED OUT AT LEAST UNTIL THE ARAB FOREIGN MINISTERS MEET IN COLOMBO PRIOR TO THE SUMMIT.

8. THE MAURITIUS SUMMIT:

9. MIDDLE EAST ISSUES RECEIVED A SIMILAR LOW-KEY TREATMENT AT THE OAU SUMMIT IN PORT LOUIS. THERE IS LITTLE EVIDENCE THAT THE MIDDLE EAST FIGURED PROMINENTLY IN THE DEBATES OF EITHER THE MINISTERIAL MEETING, WHICH PRECEDED THE CHIEFS OF STATE SESSION, OR THE EARLY SESSIONS OF THE SUMMIT. THE NIGERIAN FOREIGN MINISTER, FOR EXAMPLE, REPORTED THAT HE HAD BEEN VERY BUSY "BEATING BACK" ARAB ATTEMPTS TO RAISE EXPULSION AS AN ISSUE AT THE MINISTERIAL MEETING BUT THAT SUB-SAHARAN AFRICANS HAD SHOWN LITTLE INTEREST.

10. THE ENTEBBE RAID BROUGHT NEW TURBULENCE INTO THE SUMMIT MEETING, WHICH WAS ALREADY GRAPPLING WITH A NUMBER OF CONTROVERSIAL SUBJECTS.

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11. OAU MEMBERS WERE SHAKEN BY THE SPEED AND FACILITY WITH WHICH ISRAEL MANAGED TO EXTRICATE ITS HOSTAGES FROM ENTEBBE AIRPORT. THE ISRAELI SUCCESS DEMONSTRATED OPENLY THE MILITARY VULNERABILITY AND WEAKNESS OF AFRICAN COUNTRIES. NOT SURPRISINGLY, THE AFRICANS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY A LIBERIAN RESOLUTION CONDEMNING THE ISRAELIS FOR THE ENTEBBE RAID. LIBERIAN FOREIGN MINISTER DENNIS LATTER CLAIMED THAT HIS RESOLUTION HAD BEEN CONSIDERABLY MODIFIED TO REMOVE REFERENCES TO CHAPTER VII SANCTIONS AND CONSPIRACY. THE LIBERIAN ACTION DEMONSTRATED THAT EVEN MODERATE AFRICAN STATES FIND IT DIFFICULT TO DISPLAY SOLIDARITY IN THE WAKE OF AN ATTACK AGAINST A FELLOW OAU MEMBER.

12. (NOTE: THE OAU RESOLUTION EXPRESSED DEEP ALARM AT THE "ISRAELI AGGRESSION" AT ENTEBBE AIRPORT, TERMING IT A THREAT TO INTERNATIONAL PEACE. THE RESOLUTION NOTED THAT SUCH AGGRESSION WAS THE RESULT OF THE POLICY OF ISRAELI-SOUTH AFRICAN COOPERATION AIMED AT THREATENING THE INDEPENDENCE AND TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY OF ALL AFRICAN AND ARAB STATES. IT ALSO CALLED FOR AN IMMEDIATE MEETING OF THE UN SECURITY COUNCIL TO TAKE ACTION AGAINST ISRAEL,

EXPRESSED FULL SUPPORT FOR UGANDA, AND ASKED THAT ALL AFRICAN STATES INTENSIFY THEIR EFFORTS TO ISOLATE ISRAEL.)

13. ARAB REACTION WAS EXPRESSED BY EGYPTIAN VICE-PRESIDENT MUBARAK, WHO ON BEHALF OF THE ARABIC-SPEAKING OAU MEMBERS CHARGED THAT:

(A)--THE ISRAELI ACTION NOT ONLY VIOLATED UGANDAN SOVEREIGNTY BUT CONSTITUTED AN ACT OF AGGRESSION AGAINST ALL OF AFRICA;

(B)--ISRAELI AND SOUTH AFRICAN COOPERATION SERVED TO UNDERMINE THE SECURITY AND INDEPENDENCE OF ARABIAN AND AFRICAN COUNTRIES AND WEAKENED AFRICAN LIBERATION MOVEMENTS.

MUBARAK STOPPED SHORT, HOWEVER, OF URGING EXCLUSION FROM THE UNGA OR ANY OTHER SANCTIONS AGAINST ISRAEL. MOREOVER,
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THE EVENTUAL OAU RESOLUTION ON THE MIDDLE EAST WAS RELATIVELY MILD. IT

(A)--REAFFIRMED SUPPORT FOR EGYPT, THE CONFRONTATION STATES, AND THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE, BUT DID NOT

(B)--ENDORSE THE ZIONIST-AS-RACIST FORMULA OF LAST YEAR'S UNGA RESOLUTION.

14. THE SECURITY COUNCIL SESSION:

15. THE UGANDANS CALLED FOR A SECURITY COUNCIL DEBATE ON THE ISRAELI RAID. AT THESE SESSIONS (JULY 9-14) THE AFRICANS TRIED TO STRENGTHEN THEIR CASE BY CONCENTRATING THEIR ARGUMENTATION ON THE ISRAELI "AGGRESSION" AGAINST UGANDA, WHILE TRYING TO AVOID THE THORNY ISSUE OF INTERNATIONAL TERRORISM. THEY DEMANDED "ADEQUATE AND PROPER MEASURES" AGAINST ISRAEL; CONDEMNATION OF ISRAEL; AND COMPENSATION. THEY DID NOT, APPARENTLY IN AN EFFORT TO BROADEN THEIR SUPPORT, CALL FOR ISRAELI EXCLUSION OR ADVOCATE CHAPTER VII SANCTIONS.

16. THE AFRICAN INITIATIVE FAILED. THE RESOLUTION, WHICH CONDEMNED ISRAEL BUT DID NOT MENTION HIJACKING, WAS WITHDRAWN BECAUSE IT WOULD HAVE LACKED THE NINE VOTES NECESSARY FOR ADOPTION. THE AFRICANS' DEFEAT RESULTED FROM

(A)--THE WEAKNESS OF THEIR CASE, LIMITED TO THE UGANDAN COMPLAINT AGAINST AGGRESSION (THIS WAS ADMITTED PRIVATELY BY TANZANIAN UN AMBASSADOR SALIM, WHO LAID IT TO THE

AFRICANS' PERCEIVED NEED FOR UNITY);

(B)--STRONG EFFORTS BY THE WESTERN MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL TO FOCUS THE DEBATE ON HIJACKING;

(C)--EMBARRASSMENT AT BEING ALIGNED WITH UGANDAN PRESIDENT AMIN;

(D)--THE PERSUASIVENESS OF THE US DENIAL THAT THE ISRAELI RAID COULD BE CONSIDERED A PRECEDENT FOR "UNAUTHORIZED SECRET

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ENTRY"; AND

(E)--AFRICAN INABILITY TO PERSUADE PANAMA FROM ABSTAINING.

17. ENTEBBE AFTERMATH:

18. ENTEBBE RAISES FUNDAMENTAL PROBLEMS FOR THE AFRICANS, SINCE

(A)--THEY CANNOT OVERLOOK AN ATTACK ON ANOTHER AFRICAN STATE; AND

(B)--THEY REMAIN FEARFUL OF ISRAELI-SOUTH AFRICAN COOPERATION, AS EVIDENCED BY PRIME MINISTER VORSTER'S APRIL VISIT TO ISRAEL AND REPORTS OF COLLABORATION IN NUCLEAR AND MILITARY FIELDS.

19. AFRICAN REACTION, THOUGH DIVERSE, IS REFLECTED BY SUCH ACTIONS AS:

(A)--THE OAU SECRETARIAT'S DENUNCIATION (JULY 16) OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL'S "DILATORY MANEUVERS" IN DEFENSE OF ISRAEL, INCLUDING THE THREAT OF "THE ABUSIVE AND SHAMEFUL USE OF THE VETO."

(B)--ZAIRIAN PRESIDENT MOBUTU'S PUBLIC CONDEMNATION OF THE ENTEBBE RAID AS "RIDICULING" ALL OF AFRICA. (PRIVATELY, ZAIRIAN OFFICIALS EXPRESSED ADMIRATION FOR ISRAEL'S EFFECTIVENESS AND BELIEVED THAT AMIN'S COLLABORATION MERITED THE ATTACK.)

AS MOBUTU'S STATEMENT DEMONSTRATED, EVEN THE MODERATE AFRICAN LEADERS PERCEIVE THE NEED TO GO ON RECORD AGAINST THE ENTEBBE OPERATION.

20. EVIDENCE SUGGESTING THAT SOME ARAB MILITANTS, WHO ARE CERTAIN TO RESURFACE THE EXCLUSION ISSUE AT COLOMBO, WILL TRY TO EXPLOIT THIS AFRICAN REACTION TO ENTEBBE INCLUDES:

(A)--NIGER'S FOREIGN MINISTER'S ASSESSMENT THAT THE
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ARABS WOULD PUSH EXCLUSION TO EXPLOIT ENTEBBE; AND

(B)--AN EGYPTIAN FOREIGN MINISTRY OFFICIAL'S CLAIM ON
JULY 9 THAT AFTER THE ENTEBBE RAID MANY OAU DELEGATES
AT MAURITIUS, INCLUDING A REPRESENTATIVE FROM ONE OF

THE "MOST PRO-ISRAELI AFRICAN STATES," HAD SHOWN NEW
INTEREST IN PRESSING THE EXCLUSION ISSUE WITH THE NAM.

21. ON THE OTHER HAND, THE ARAB AND AFRICAN STATES
THAT OPPOSED EXCLUSION IN THE PAST HAVE NOT APPARENTLY
SWITCHED POSITIONS AS A RESULT OF ENTEBBE. IN PARTICULAR,
EGYPT, ZAIRE, LIBERIA (ACCORDING TO EMBASSY MONROVIA,
PRESIDENT TOLBERT WAS APPARENTLY ANNOYED BY HIS FOREIGN
MINISTER'S ACTIVE ROLE AT MAURITIUS), AND SENEGAL (WHERE
BOTH PRESS AND OFFICIAL CRITICISM OF ISRAEL HAS BEEN
MUTED) REMAIN OPPOSED.

22. BOLSTERING THIS ASSESSMENT ARE OBSERVATIONS BY
OTHER KNOWLEDGEABLE NAM MEMBERS:

(A)--A YUGOSLAV ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS
ADMITTED TO AMBASSADOR SILVERMAN IN BELGRADE ON JULY 14
THAT THE SUB-SAHARAN AFRICAN COUNTRIES STILL MAINTAIN
THE POSITION THAT ISRAEL'S EXCLUSION FROM THE UNGA
WOULD BE NEITHER A "RIGHT" NOR HELPFUL ACTION;

(B)--YUGOSLAV FOREIGN MINISTER MINIC TOLD AMBASSADOR
SCRANTON ON JULY 23 THAT UNLESS SOMETHING HAPPENED
TO WORSEN THE SITUATION, THE COLOMBO SUMMIT WOULD CALL
FOR CHAPTER VII SANCTIONS AGAINST ISRAEL, AS AT LIMA;

(C)--AN INDIAN FOREIGN MINISTRY OFFICIAL TOLD EMBASSY
NEW DELHI ON JULY 15 THAT THE ENTEBBE INCIDENT WOULD
NOT PROMPT A HARDENING OF THE CURRENT DRAFT POLITICAL
DECLARATION; AND

(D)--MALAYSIAN DEPUTY UN REPRESENTATIVE SINGH TOLD AMBAS-
SADOR BENNETT ON JULY 21 THAT HE DID NOT BELIEVE THERE
WOULD BE A MAJOR MOVE TO EXCLUDE ISRAEL BECAUSE THE
MILITANT ARABS FAILED TO MAKE IT A MAJOR ISSUE AT THE
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OAU SUMMIT; NEITHER DID HE FORESEE A MAJOR ANTI-ISRAEL
REACTION ARISING FROM THE ENTEBBE OPERATION SINCE MOST
AFRICANS WERE EMBARRASSED OVER HAVING TO DEFEND AMIN.

23. EGYPT: KEY TO COLOMBO:

24. THE KEY TO WHETHER ENTEBBE CAN CREATE MOMENTUM FOR EXPULSION MAY REST WITH EGYPT. NIGER'S FOREIGN MINISTER PREDICTED THAT MODERATE SUB-SAHARAN STATES WOULD FOLLOW CAIRO'S LEAD, REGARDLESS OF RADICAL AFRICAN PRESSURES. EGYPTIAN FOREIGN MINISTER FAHMY CONDEMNED THE ISRAELI ACTION AS A "TERRORIST DEMONSTRATION OF A THEATRICAL NATURE." BUT OTHER OFFICIALS IN CAIRO APPARENTLY ENJOYED THE PROSPECT OF AMIN'S EMBARRASSMENT, REFLECTING:

(A)--THEIR BELIEF THAT HE WAS CULPABLE OF COLLABORATION WITH THE TERRORISTS, AND

(B)--THEIR RESENTMENT AT HIS REFUSAL TO LET 'ARAFAT'S REPRESENTATIVE PARTICIPATE IN THE NEGOTIATIONS OVER THE RELEASE OF THE HOSTAGES IN THE ENTEBBE OPERATION.

25. AND, ACCORDING TO SYRIAN FOREIGN MINISTRY OFFICIAL KAYLANI, AS OF JULY 26 EGYPT STILL FAVORED THE LIMA FORMULA (CHAPTER VII SANCTIONS) OVER AN EXCLUSION RESOLUTION, WHICH THE PLO WAS STRONGLY PUSHING.

26. CONCLUSIONS:

27. TO DATE, IT LOOKS AS THOUGH ENTEBBE WILL NOT DRASTICALLY ALTER ISRAEL'S FORTUNES AT THE NAM SUMMIT. THE NACC AND OAU MEETINGS INFLICTED LESS DAMAGE ON THE ISRAELI POSITION THAN MIGHT HAVE BEEN EXPECTED, AND THE SECURITY COUNCIL SESSION CALLED TO PROTEST THE ENTEBBE RAID DID NOT RESULT IN A RESOLUTION CONDEMNING ISRAEL, THOUGH COLOMBO IS LIKELY TO RESULT IN A CALL FOR STRONGER MEASURES. UTTERING A HARSH CONDEMNATION OF ISRAELI AGGRESSION AGAINST A MEMBER COUNTRY, THE NAM WILL PROBABLY SETTLE FOR ENDORSING THE POSITION OUTLINED IN THE DRAFT POLITICAL DECLARATION. IN THESE CIRCUMSTANCES, THERE IS LITTLE PROSPECT THAT THE DISPARATE NAM COUNTRIES CAN BE STIRRED
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TO SUFFICIENT CONCERN AND BROUGHT TO SUFFICIENT UNITY TO CALL FOR EXCLUDING ISRAEL FROM THE UNGA. KISSINGER

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